



Affixation: A Linguistic Strategy For Language Development, A Case Study Of Anaang Language

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Abstract

Affixation: A linguistic strategy for language development aims at the development of a technique which enables the language to develop to a metalanguage. We employed survey and library sources and personal intuition as an Anaang language speaker. The theoretical framework used in this work is the theory of instrumentalism. It was realized that affixation is one of the best techniques of developing Anaang language, as the base accommodates the prefix and suffix comfortably. The elaboration of this technique coupled with other coinage techniques will help the language to achieve standardization.

KEYWORDS: Affixation, Coinages and Word Formation

1.0 Introduction

Every language that is not developed needs enrichment of its vocabulary. As such every undeveloped language should develop its literary capacity through lexical enrichment otherwise the language concerned runs the risk of “dying out”. Anaang is one of the undeveloped languages; the need to create new terms to cater for new development is basic, if the people must move with the contemporary society. Almost every Nigerian language that has an enriched vocabulary reveals that where a concept was lacking in the mother tongue, the process of borrowing from other languages became the most acceptable strategy for vocabulary development. This process has been found to be accepted by native speakers.

In the grammar of English and Anaang language in particular, the parts of speech are divided into two groups. They are the open and closed class elements. The open class consists of parts of speech which are unlimited in expansion and can accommodate new items as members of their class. Members of this class are nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs and interjection. This open class is the class that the new words shall be created.

On the other hand, the closed class items, are parts of speech which are specified and fixed in number, they do not accept new words in their class. Parts of speech in this group are: pronouns, prepositions and conjunction. The strategies that are discussed in this study are semantically motivated coinage and semantically unmotivated coinage.

Coinage is a process of inventing new words or phrases to stand for an expression that did not have a name in a particular language. Coinage involves various items of a language to form words or expressions. The items so combined may be mere sounds, meaning-bearing fragments of words (known as morpheme) or whole words.

Semantically motivated coinage is made possible by combining or creating words bearing close meaning in the same language with the intension of giving meaning to a term or description in another language. They are coinage by affixation, coinage by composition, coinage by

description, coinage by restructuring and coinage by translation. Coinages by affixation is derived from affixes. They are added to words to convey another or more meaning. There are three divisions of affixes. These are: prefixes, infixes and suffixes.

Coinage by composition in language development is done by combining selected words into phrases or sentences to give the meaning of a particular term. These words so combined must be carefully chosen so that the individual meaning of the words must bear a composite meaning that must yield the same meaning of the defined term.

Coinage by description is derived from concrete objects and abstract ideas that have no similar words in indigenous language. In this aspect, coinage by description must be applied. This is done by finding out the meaning of the word and translating them by description.

Coinage by restructuring is done by reconstructing the words using morphonomic pattern of the target language. By executing the process of this coinage, it should be borne in mind that every word created out of the foreign language must follow the class of the words in the target language. This means that if a word in its source language was a noun, when it is coined in the host language, it should be a noun and if it was a verb, it should be a verb.

Coinage by translation is derived by creating the new terms in the indigenous language by translating the word derived from the source language without affecting any medium of restructuring. The semantically unmotivated coinages as the name implies are those coinages whose structure at the first encounter, does not suggest any meaning. That is to say, it does not create any semantic motivation as to what its base may mean or to what references it may be. Other strategies are semantic extension, borrowing, compounding, blending, reduplication, and clipping.

1.1 Affixation in English Language

English language which is an international and developed language today was developed through various techniques, such as borrowing, affixation, restructuring etc. The area of concentration in this work is the creation of new words through affixation. According to Nyarks (2019:)

Affixations in English are words that are basically made through three parts. These are the case of the word prefix, infixes and suffixes. The prefix, infix and suffix are the affixes which are usually added to the core of the word. The core is the root, the base or stem of the word. It makes meaning on its own. However, when we want to affect new word or its class or form, we add word at the beginning which is the prefix or at the end of the word (suffix).

Additionally, Adesina (1988) added that “some affixes can be used to create an indefinite large number of words...”

Example of core words in English;

- (1) Work
- (2) Nation
- (3) Respect
- (4) Grace
- (5) Just
- (6) Move

Examples of Prefixes and Suffixes in English

Prefix	Root word	Suffix
Un	work	able
Inter	nation	ally
Ir	respect	ive
Dis	grace	ful
Un	just	ifiably
Un	reach	able

Meaning of some prefixes and suffixes which helped in the formation of new words in English.

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
dis	not	disgrace
mis	wrong	misjudge/ mistake
inter	between	international/interrupt
re	again/back	relation/retrace
a	on	ashore/aloft
ante	before	antecedent
bi, bis	two, twice	bicycle/bisect
de	down	depress/descend
un	not without	unknown, unpaid
ex	out of	exhale, export
ob	against	object obstruction
Suffix	Meaning	Examples
-less	without	guiltless, merciless
-able; ible	capable	incredible
-full	full of	faithful
-rence	state of	existence, occurrence

-ous	ful of	courageous
-ness	quality of being or state	quickness

Grammatical Analysis of Affixation

As already mentioned affixes may change the class of a word.

Let us look at the following examples;

Root word	Suffix	Form
Beauty (noun)	-full	beautiful (adjective)
Inform (verb)	-ation	information (noun)
Grace (verb/noun)	-fully	gracefully (adverb)

1.2 Theory of Instrument

The theory of instrumentalism was propounded by Punya Sloka Ray and Valter Tauli, as cited in Mesthrie et al (2000). This theory observes language as “mere tools for communication, imperfect in their natural state, this means that language can be evaluated, changed, developed and new words can be created”. Tauli, (2000) one of the advocates, observes that language can be evaluated with regards to their efficiency. This fact is established on the premise that linguists can make value judgment about languages by eliminating illogical constructs, unclear structure (ambiguity) and evaluating what must not be in the language but of concrete linguistic features from the point of view of economy, clarity, elasticity, etc.

Furthermore, Tauli points out that the central aim of language planning is a methodological improvement of linguistic system based on a language ideal which is characterized not only by the linguistic efficiency (which may be easy to learn and use) and communicative adequacy but that it also concerns uniformity and beauty.

Later, she observes that linguistic engineering is sometime used to refer to the approach which often concentrates on changes affecting the language corpus and perceived language planning as a mere technical, linguistic exercise. She notes that some of the non-linguistic measures, which affect creation of artificial language, include lack of political and economy power and negative attitude of the people. Derived from the framework highlighted by these scholars, this study adopts the theory of instrumentalism as its major theoretical framework to achieve the goal of providing the strategies towards the development of a metalanguage in Anaang.

1.3 Research instrument and methodology

We made use of extract of 122 words from the NERDC 2000 template. Others were lexical materials, the two orthographies of Anaang language, books, journals and individuals.

The primary source of data collection in this study was the library sources. Since this work is

on language development. Anaang community was the setting. So we gathered our data from the language. The secondary source was the use of lexical and documentary materials since this work is on the strategies of metalanguage. Finally, my intuition as a native speaker, who lived in the language community from birth had been of immense contribution to the data collection.

2.0 Vocabulary Development: Coinage by Affixation in Anaang

In linguistics, an affix is a morpheme that is attached to a word to form a new word or word form. Affixes may be derivational, like English -ness and -less, or inflectional like English plural -s and past tense -ed

(Wikipedia). According to Manova (2017), affixation is a morphological process whereby a bound morpheme, an affix is attached to a morphological base. Diachronologically, the English word affix was first used as a verb and has its origin in Latin "affixus", as past participle of the verb affigere, ad -"to" figere "to fix". Affixation according to her falls in the scope of morphology where bound morphemes are either roots or affixes. She describes prefixes as affixes that precede the root and suffixes as affixes that followed the root and the most common types of affixes across linguistically. She further explains as a mark derivational (-er in teacher) and inflectional (-s in teachers) changes and affixation is the most common strategy that human languages employ for derivation of new words and word forms.

One of the major strategies of technical terms development involves affixation. Affixation is addition of either the prefix or the suffix to the root word in order to portray another meaning or part of speech. The affixes that are available in Anaang language will be identified here so that the chances of their usage in vocabulary development of new words may be exploited.

(i) V-	n-
́kọkọ (dislocate)	nkókó (dislocation)
táñña (gather remnants)	ńtañña (remnants)
sàghá (walk)	nsángha (walking)

Anaang Prefix patterning to verb "ke"

Root	Prefix	Word Formed	Verb Formation
tan (talk)	ke	ketan	go and talk
nyam (sell)	ke	Keyam	go and sell
mia (slap)	ke	kemia	go and slap
bob (tight)	ke	kebob	go and tight
kon (knock)	ke	kekɔn	go and knock
diɔn (repair)	ke	ke diɔññ	go and repair
kum (sew)	ke	kekum	go and sew
sine (wear)	ke	kesine	go and wear
kwɔ (sing)	ke	kekɔ	go and sing
bak (slaughter)	ke	kebak	go and slaughter

Table 2
Anaang prefix “nni” and “n” in turning verbs to nouns

Root (verbs)	Prefix	Noun formed	Meaning
Che (look)	nni	nniche	picture
Ta (chew)	nni	nnita	meat
Dia (eat)	nni	nnidia	food
Sine (wear)	n	nsine	clothes

Table 3
The use of the prefix “m and n” on verbs to form nouns

Root (verbs)	Prefix	Noun formed	Meaning
Kpa (die)	m	mkpa	death
Fekke (be deformed)	m	mfeke	deformed person
Kpele (be near)	m	mkpele	nearness
Sine (wear)	m	mfolo	shirt
Na (lie down)	n	nna	bed
(ii)			
sine (dress)		nsine (dressing)	
na (lie down)		nna (place of rest)	
i-			
lɔk (harvest) (v)		ilok (harvest n)	
sɔro (squat)		isoro (squatting)	
na (lie down)		ina (sex)	
tie (sit down)		itie (seat)	
ma (love) (v)		ima (love (n))	
kood (call) (v)		ikood (call (n))	
baaña (gossip about)		ibaaña (gossip (n))	
(iii)			
u-			
tañ (galk) (v)		utañ (talking)	
nyie (own it)		unyie (owners)	
sɔbɔ (be fast)		usɔb (speed)	
nek (dance) (v)		unek (dance)	
luak (be desirous)		uluak (desire)	
tangha (quarrel) (n)		utangha (quarrel (n))	
foro (be prosperous)		uforo (prosperity)	
deb (buy)		udeb (buyers)	
(iv)			
a-			
Ma (love) (v)		ama (lover)	

Table 4
Anaang prefix “ke” patterning to preposition

Root	Prefix	Word formed	Glose
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anyong (sky)	ke	keanyong	in the sky
ubium (kitchen store)	ke	keubium	in the kitchen store
ke obod	ke	keobod	on the hill
ke urua	ke	keurua	inside the market

Table 5
Anaang prefix “ku” used to mark negation

Root	Prefix	New Words formed	Gloss
nyong (loitering)	ku	kunyong	do not loiter
kpa (cut)	ku	kukpa	do not cut
bak (slaughter)	ku	kubak	do not slaughter
nyam (ssell)	ku	kuyam	do not sell

Table 6
Double Affixation
Prefixes and suffixes used in expression

Prefix	Base	suffix	Word/Sentence
n	seme (regret)	Ka	nsemeke I will not regret. I am not regretting.
m	ma (love)	gha	mmagha I do not love it.
n	dia (eat)	gha	ndiagha I will not eat. I am not eating.
n	li (come)	ghe	nlighe I will not come. I am not coming.
n	tia (kick)	gha	ntiagha I will not kick. I am not kicking.
i	feghe (escape)	ke	ifegheke They have not escaped. They are not escaping.
m	feghe (run)	ke	mfegheke I will not run.

			I am not running.
m	kpa (cut)	gha	mkpaha I will not cut it I am not cutting it
i	kpeke (cut)	ke	ikpekeke He has not cut it. He is not cutting it.
i	ka (go)	gha	Ikagha He has not gone. He is not going.
n	tɔ (plant)	gho	ntogho I have not planted. I am not planting.
n	seme	ke	nsemeke I have not lamented. I am not lamenting.
n	tua (cried)	gha	ntugha I have not cried. I am not crying.
i	dɔ (marry)	gho	idɔghɔ He has not married. He is not marrying.
n	tie (sit)	ghe	Ntieghe I have not sat. I am not sitting.
t	tañ (say)	gha	itangha He has not said it. He is not saying it.
u	kan	na	Ukagha You will not deny. You are not denying it.

2.1 Analysis of coinage by affixation

As already indicated in the tables above, in Anaang, affixes are very important in word development; for instance: “ke” is a prefix in Anaang which serves a multifarious part of speech. It is a preposition and also a verb.

As a preposition it is used as follows:

- (i) Mba ke ufok – I am in the house
- (ii) Mbolu aba ke echid ulua – Banana is found inside the market
- (iii) Nsɔlɔ ke anyong akom – I am on top of the roof

As shown above, “ke” serves as a preposition in various capacities as a preposition; “in, inside, on” etc for example (i) “mba ke ufok” “I am in the house” Example (ii) above functions as a preposition by indicating the particular location in the market “inside the market”, “ke echid ulua”, showing where banana could be found in the market”. In example (iii,) it functions as the preposition “on” showing where the speaker could be found, “on top of the roof”, “ke anyong akom”.

More examples are “ke” to form “ke anyong” on the roof”, in another example ke “ubium” is the kitchen store combined with ‘ke’ we have ‘in the kitchen store.

In another dimension, the prefix ‘ke’ may serve as a verb as shown below:

“Ke” a prefix added to the root verb “tan”, “ketan”, “go and talk”. Others are “ke mia” (root word), slap, added to “ke” to mean “kemia” – go and slap.

Another prefix used in turning verbs to nouns are “che”, “nni”, “dia”, “sine”. They could be added to root verbs “ta, dia, sine” to function as nouns in the following examples. Nni (prefix) added to “che” to form “nni che” picture, “nn” (prefix) added to “ta” (root) to form “nnita”, “n” added to root word “sine” to form a noun “nsine” (clothe).

There are some singular prefix such as “u, a, a, “, these are used on roots words to form new words. The use of these singular prefixes in Anaang are shown below in the following examples: “m” prefix added to a root word “feke” (be deformed) a root verb, to become “mfeke” (deformed person).

(i) The Prefix “m” may also be added to the root verb, “fɔlɔ” (wear shirt), to form a noun “mfolo” (shirt). Another singular prefix which is used for word formation is “n”. it may added to the root, verb “na” (sleep) to form a noun, “nna”, “bed” etc. other examples are as follows:

- (ii) “n” prefix may be added to “kɔkɔ” (verb, root) to form the noun “nkɔkɔ” (dislocation).
- (iii) n + sana (clean) – nsana (a clean thing)
- (iv) Another prefix in this singular prefix word formation is “i”, which may be added to the following root words to form nouns are as follows:
- (v) “l” – “lɔk” harvest” (verb) to form the noun “ilɔk” (harvest)
- (vi) isɔrɔ “squatt (verb) to form the noun, isɔrɔ (squatting).
- (vii) i-kood (call) verb to form the noun “kood” (call).

2.2 Word formation with suffix

There is another aspect of the affixation which is in the suffix. These are segments of words added to the back of the words to form another word. As illustrated in Table 2 most of the suffixes in Anaang are used for negation purpose. However, we still have some prefixes used for negation too.

The prefix used in Anaang for negation is “ku”. It may be added to monosyllabic, bisyllabic or multisyllabic words. Let us consider the following examples:

- (i) ku uyong/kuyong, (do not go). There is harmonization of the vowel sound to have /kuyɔŋ/meaning “do not go”.
- (ii) Ku + ubak – kubak – (do not slaughter).

2.3 Word formation with prefix and suffix

Apart from the above another way of creating negation is the use of two affixes, the prefix,

“u”, “n”, “m”, “I”, and the suffixes “ku”, “gh”, “gho”, “na”, etc. let us consider the following examples.

Prefix + root + suffix

- i) u + Seme + Ke (you are not stupid)
- ii) m + ma + gha Mmagha – I do not love it
- iii) n + dia + gha ndiagha – I will not eat
- iv) i + kpeke + ke ikpekeke – He has not cut
- v) n + to + gho ntogho – I have not panted

3.0 Conclusion

Coinage by affixation is a productive strategy of developing a language by using prefix and suffix to convey meaning. As shown above, there are prefixes and suffixes that could be added to the base to portray negation or positiveness. Also, there are ones that can change the entire class of speech from one part of speech to the other. Deduced from the above, it is realized that coinage by affixation is very reliable in creating new words.

4.0 Recommendation

Coinage by affixation is highly recommended for language development. Other strategies such as coinage by translation and description should be worked on.

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